

# People involved in a debate



**Affirmative Team:** This team of speakers supports the moot - they present a team case in favour of it.



**Negative Team:** This team of speakers oppose the moot - they present a team case against it.



**Chair/Chairperson:** This person welcomes the audience, announces the moot, introduces the teams, both Affirmative and Negative, welcomes the Adjudicator, outlines the basic rules for the debate (e.g. times for speaking and the expectations of audience behaviour - no interjections or heckling during the debate, listening politely to the arguments). The Chair calls on each speaker in turn to address the audience, rules on any points of order raised and, at the end of the debate, calls upon the Adjudicator to announce the result. After the announcement, the Chair thanks the Adjudicator, the debaters, and the audience, then closes the debate.



**Timekeeper:** This person keeps the speaking times of the debaters and announces them, at the conclusion of each speech, for the Adjudicator to record on the marking sheet. The timekeeper signals when the speaker has 30 seconds remaining to speak (usually with a single bell-ring, or by tapping out an agreed signal), and then signals again when the speaking time is up. If necessary, an additional signal will be given to stop an over-length speech.



**Adjudicator:** Usually one person, but sometimes two. The Adjudicator's job is to judge the debate, and to decide which team has presented the more successful argument on the moot. It is usual for the Adjudicator to make a short speech summing up admirable or problematic aspects of the debate, before announcing the winning team (and their winning points), as well as declaring the Best Speaker of the debate.



**Audience:** The Audience is also essential to a debate. The speakers present their arguments to convince the audience, who should listen politely and may respond with laughter and applause when points are made. It is not usual in school debates to allow interjections or heckling from the audience during the debate.

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